



“We shall meet, but we will miss him,
There will be one vacant chair.”

(cited by Jane Reid at Coastal and Marine Geology
memorial for Terry Bruns; from Civil War era song by
Henry Stevenson Washburn)

Text of STAR Award to Terry Bruns, July 2006

by Jane Reid <jareid@usgs.gov>

Terry Bruns has recently returned fulltime to science after nine (yes nine!) years as Associate Team Chief Scientist of the Western Region Coastal and Marine Geology Team. He has been our rock since 1996; providing continuity, wise guidance, occasional scolding, a willing ear, a noble spirit of comradery and selflessness, and behind-the-scenes web mastery to hold us together.

Terry ensured that the disparate parts of CMG talked to each other, worked with each other, and appreciated each other. He carefully crafted space plans for the good of the team and the good of the Center, ensuring each of us had the best physical place to work in. When the places didn't quite work out as hoped, he listened to complaints, acted on them, and arranged funding to improve things as much as possible.

Terry managed the impossible: creating an environment that provided the best for the agency as a whole, and for each of us as individuals, guaranteeing we felt appreciated, motivated, educated, and challenged.

Terry also "trained" two outside-the-team Chief Scientists and two acting Chief Scientists, in the ways of the team, counseling about the ramifications of actions from a historical and knowledgeable viewpoint, and mysterious ways of a Federal agency. He knew how and where to go to get something done, information found, questions answered.

While Terry is known for his infrequent and awesome use of crankiness, it only put the situation into its correct perspective; it did not intimidate or threaten. Despite his overall demeanor as a "nice guy", he was not a pushover; he set limits and enforced them.

For all the thankless and unpleasant things Terry did for the good of the team over the last near-decade, for the Saturday mornings (and afternoons) he gave up, and for blessing the team with his service, the Western Region Coastal and Marine Geology Team wholeheartedly thanks him and provides him with some funds to say, "Whew". A separate award gives him time to do so, as well.

